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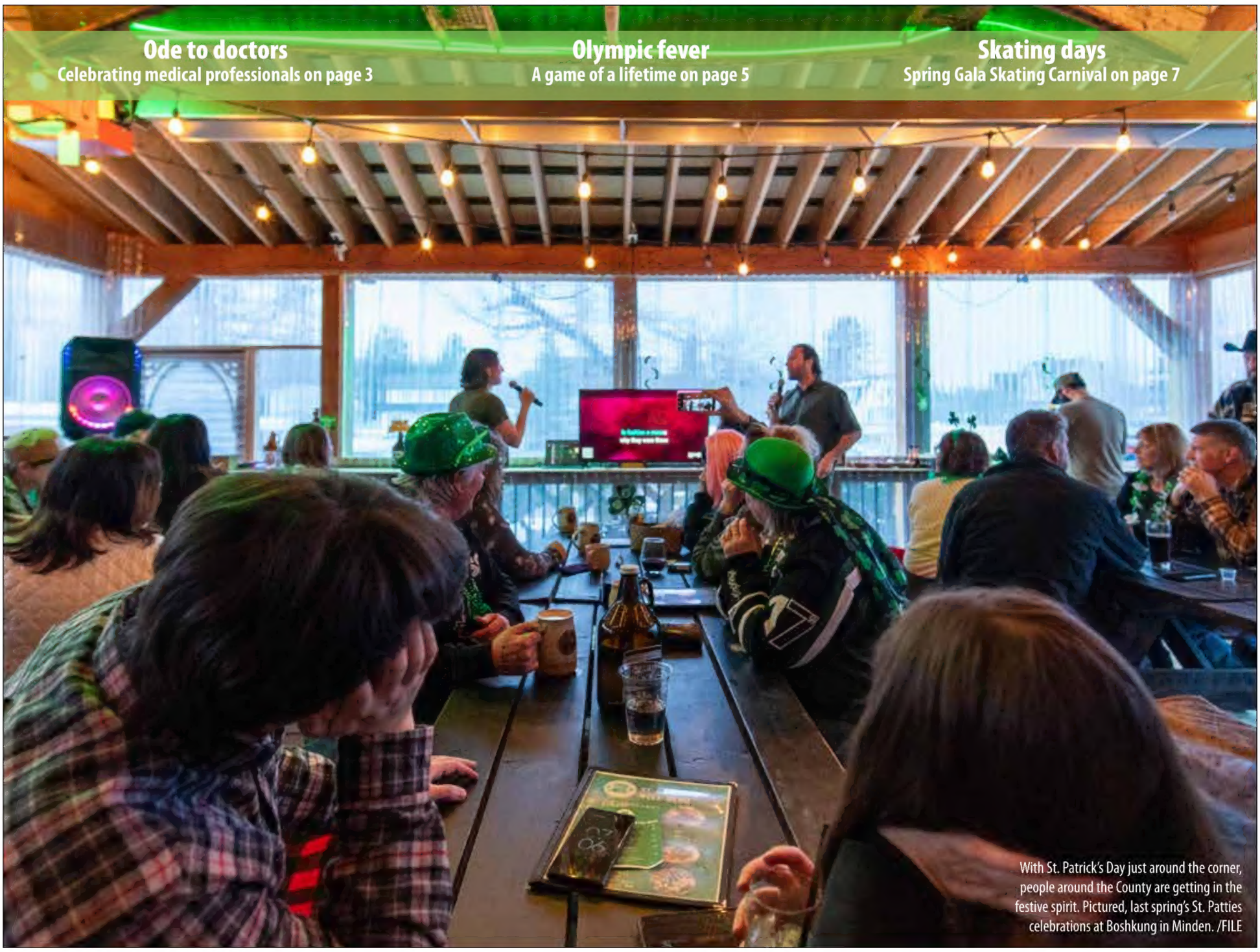

With St. Patrick's Day just around the corner, people around the County are getting in the festive spirit. Pictured, last spring's St. Patties celebrations at Boshkung in Minden. /FILE

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KATE: *Angry*

I WANT to be called *Cat*, not Kate. I've just cut my own hair. I get to choose stuff too. I hate being bossed around. I don't like being told what to do. Ever!

I hate school. My dog-faced long-haired big sister loves Grade 9. She's a *fool for school.* That's how I tease her. It's easy to make her cry. So I do. She's older, but she's a total wimpy nerd and has creepy friends. They seem to like school too. They do homework together over their phones, and get good marks. How lame is that? They even read actual books, for *fun*, and do volunteering and other boring stuff instead of cooler things like unlocking enchantments in Minecraft, or scaring the JKs from behind the bushes.

DEB REED
Wind in the Attic

One thing I hate is all the in-class writing. Plus, I'm supposed to have opinions on things, and hand in an editorial every month. I just can't spell. Fridays scare me. We practice context words from lessons. I won't even sign up for dictating them. Or marking. I always spell half of them wrong. Miss Fields says she doesn't use our scores. She just hopes we'll understand what studying is. She's going to show us some tricks and clues that help with spelling. Not everybody gets words, she says. It took her a long time to start reading.

We've been in school three weeks, and I've messed up two dictations. That stinks. I still can't tell the difference between d, p or b. Sometimes they seem backwards. Sometimes upside down. Sometimes they look the same. And I can't learn cursive. I'm actually useless.

I've been getting help from Mr. Speller twice a week since Grade 3. How's that for a name? I go to a special classroom with other kids for an hour. I hate going. It's so obvious that I'm having problems. It makes me crazy.

Some kids call me a bully. I don't think so. I just have a temper, and I'm not afraid to use it. I get frustrated with Mr. Speller. He's fine, but I want to quit. He tells me not quite yet since we're getting somewhere. *Being mad is sometimes ok,* he says. *Being mad all the time? Not so much.*

Miss Fields says that I can use a classroom laptop. I'll speak my editorials into the microphone, and my ideas will get written for me. Then we'll read back what's on the screen, review it together, print it, and I'll have the real thing.

Wow. If we collect 10 months of my opinions into a folder without me freaking out, then I'll have a Grade 5 journal like everybody else. I could write about Minecraft. How I love when it's my turn to cook. How I can make stop-motion LEGO videos on Mom's iPhone. How I'm really smart.

I could even write a letter to my sister and slip it under her door. It'll say sorry, and that I miss playing with her.

CountyLife

The following inserts are being distributed with County Life this week:

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For information on how your flyer can be inserted each week in County Life please contact Melissa Armstrong at **613-332-2002** or **melissa@haliburtonpress.com**

What do we want to hold space for?

I HAD the chance a few weeks ago to hear a minister speak about a metaphor for our busy lives. He talked about a glass that appeared empty but was in fact filled to the brim with air. So the analogy then was that the air represented all the things that we can't see that clog up our weeks and days.

Our worries, our doubts, our resentments, memories, trauma, hurts and happy emotions and thoughts also. That full to the brim idea that the glass represented, then turned to how we might empty the glass of air, how would we suck out the air, how could we force out the air, create a vacuum. He was quick to point out that all the strategies that remove the air would inevitably harm the glass through the depressurization.

TERESA JORDAN
Community Living Contemplations

The glass was full of air, full of our anxious thoughts and constant emotions and it would appear his analogy was offering nothing to lessen the load. Then he offered that the simplest way to empty the glass of air was to fill it with water. How simple the air no longer has the space it needs because this is replaced by the water.

Then Reverend Jonathan Baird concluded, sometimes we get so focused on what we want to remove we start to destroy our moments and the days with the pressure of how to create a more balanced peaceful life. Just like the water in the glass analogy, a better tactic could be to focus on what we want our glass to be full of and pour it in.

Is it mindfulness, is it an important person, is it faith, is it peace. What can we add, top up and layer on that begins to push the anxious space holders up and out of the limited space of our minds and days and weeks. What do we want to hold the space for, what is it that will calm and nourish and how can we pour so much of that in, that there is almost no space for the rest? Grab a pitcher of peace and keep pouring.

Writing on the Senior Side

Here's to Doctors

GAIL STELTER

County Life Contributor

I need to get one thing straight. I have always had great doctors. I am here today because, on at least two separate occasions, doctors have saved my life. The health care professionals I deal with each year, and most of my life, are both knowledgeable and caring towards patients.

Okay, now that that is settled, I can tell you what I said to my newest doctor.

After waiting a few months, I am at my appointment in Peterborough with my newest specialist, a respirologist, about my ongoing shortness of breath. She is wonderful, caring and obviously a competent expert in this field. It is a pleasant consultation appointment, and as it nears its end, I said, no I practically blurted out, "I'm done with doctors". Where did that come from? You know how we use the cliché "jaw dropped," and her "eyes opened wide"? Well, that was exactly her response. You would have laughed to see me quickly backtrack. "Oh no, I didn't mean that. I mean I am tired of not feeling well and all the doctor appointments." She smiled, but I'm still not sure she believed me. Anyway, we parted on good terms. I now have an appointment for a breathing test in a glass box and will see her afterwards for the results. Between you and me, I don't expect the test to show anything new. My lungs are getting all the oxygen they need. I just get short of breath. It's all good when you're almost 77 years old. Our bodies are aging, and non-life-threatening ailments are best taken in stride as we go forward, grabbing life's lovely moments.

But my comment was my truth; another filter not in place, and not a time to be expressed in quite those words, but I am tired of doctor's appointments. In the last two weeks, I have been on the road again (no, not like Willie Nelson), to Peterborough for this appointment and then back a week later for an MRI on my back, and in another week or so on the road again to Lindsay for a pre-appointment about cataract surgeries. And let's not forget this week's appointment for a CT scan of my lungs. Giving thanks to everyone who helped in any way to bring the CT scanner to Haliburton. One less road trip was great. Now, before you chastise me for whining, remember the first sentence of this writing: I appreciate all my doctors and the great health care in Canada. There is a story in my book, *21 Smithfield Drive*, called *"The Healthiest Sick Kid in Grade 8,"* and another called *"The Honeymoon and the Hospital."* Even in the first nineteen years of my life, I was the healthy sick kid and healthy sick newlywed. I have included an excerpt from each of these stories, and I hope you enjoy reading them.

Perhaps the best way to describe my current escapades as a senior is to say I am one of the healthiest sick seniors I know. I am blessed to be living such a wonderful life. Staying positive is as important as medicine and appointments. Here's to doctors!

An excerpt from

The Healthiest Sick Kid in Grade 8

The operation was strange. There was no nurse or assistant with the doctor. I was awake during it; not fully awake, but certainly not asleep. I felt and heard the cutting in my throat. Soon, it was over. Dad took me home, and I went to bed.

"She's coughing and spitting up a lot of blood." Dad was on the phone with the doctor.

"That's normal. She'll be fine".

An hour later.

"I don't think it's normal. She keeps losing consciousness and more blood."

"I'm coming over."

The doctor examined me and said I looked fine, but I was still losing quite a bit of blood. He put a nail into the bedroom wall and hung an intravenous bottle on it. It was not blood, just a clear liquid. He left and said he would check back later.

I continued to be in and out of consciousness and continued to cough up blood. I also had a severe stomachache. The doctor came back and gave me a laxative.

Mom came home from work. The doctor was bending over me when my 19-year-old brother, Jimmy, came home, walked into my bedroom and looked down at me.

Jimmy said, "Look at her. She's dying. Call an ambulance."

An excerpt from

The Honeymoon and the Hospital

Exploratory surgery was considered.

My parents were frantic. My dad called the doctor. It took several tries before the doctor answered his calls. The doctor said, "I spoke to the husband."

Oh my, daddy's little girl was married, had been for five whole days. Daddy didn't count anymore. That did not go over well, but he understood that it was a new time in our lives.

Poor Peter. He was also distraught. He went home each night to our apartment. He was lonely and worried. He came to the hospital many times, and I recognized his footsteps on the hall floors. I listened for those footsteps. I wanted him to stay all the time, but they didn't let him. He brought me flowers. When I was starting to feel better, he brought me a sweet card. It was huge, maybe two feet tall. It had a fuzzy cat on the front. The cat had a thermometer in its mouth. Inside the card were the words "I hope you're not getting fixed."

I was in bed when a nurse came to the door with a tray of meds. She peeked in and asked me if I was Margaret Stelter. I said, "No. You must have the wrong room".

Oops. After she went away, I remembered my name wasn't Kennedy anymore, and my first name was Margaret. Oh well, I was only just married, and in my mind, I was still Gail Kennedy. It was quite funny as I tried to explain this.

Plans were made for surgery, but just as suddenly as I had started throwing up, I stopped. They decided to keep me in one more night just to be sure I was, indeed, getting better.

Raven by Tammy Nash

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"Fly tying" is difficult

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

NOW THAT spring open water fishing opportunities are coming our way quickly, many people – me included – are filling up their fly boxes by tying their own flies. But, for every angler who ties his or her own, there are many others who choose to buy them.

I don't blame them. Fly tying is difficult.

To be clear: the actual craft of fly tying is not difficult at all. I am living proof that you don't have to be a genius to do it. All you need are the right tools and materials, a book or YouTube, and a bit of patience. With those things in your corner, you'll be tying fishable flies in no time.

No, the difficult part is saying the phrase "fly tying".

You see, when most people begin fly tying, they will invariably refer to it at least as "tie flying." This is how we experienced fly tyers recognize the rookies in the group.

As you can imagine, this is highly embarrassing for the person who said it. So much so, that it causes some people to quit after doing it for the tenth or twelfth time in a conversation.

Oh, sure, I have seen some people try to avoid the embarrassment by insisting that they said it intentionally. They typically follow-up by explaining that they were referring to people on a plane in business class – you know the "Tie Flyers." But we experienced fly tyers know differently. Because each of us has done this before.

Having been there, I would tell anyone who takes up fly tying that there is light at the end of the tunnel. You can and will get over this debilitating affliction.

But it will take years. Worse still, there may be recurrences.

Just the other day, for instance, Jenn wondered why I had gone to the basement and was suddenly and uncharacteristically silent.

"What did you do now?" were her exact words.

I can honestly say that I had done nothing. I was just sitting at my fly-tying bench tying more flies.

So, I happily responded, "Don't worry. I'm just tie flying!"

Even before it left my lips, I knew that I had messed up, though Jenn – bless her heart – acted as if nothing had happened.

As you can imagine, I was justifiably horrified. I mean, I have been ~~tie flying~~ fly tying for nearly 50 years now. I thought I was long past this.

I tried to tell myself that it was just a fluke – a simple and unfortunate slip of the tongue. But, later that day, I said it again. And, Jenn, once again, acted as if she never actually listens to a word I say.

But I won't lie. I'm worried.

I know, the road to recovery will not be easy. I will now have to slow down when I speak about creating flies – and then, be very deliberate when I say the words fly tying. But I will get there. I will come out the other side sounding like a guy who knows what he's talking about.

Yes, I will have to slow down when I say those words, especially when I am at the fly-fishing club. And, as much as it pains me, I will continue practicing the phrase "fly tying" until it becomes second nature again. The last thing you want to do is say it wrong in front of a group of experienced tie flyers.

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A Canadian in Milan; a local take on the Women's Olympic game

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

Lindsey Snelgrove shared her experience attending the gold medal match between Canada and the United States Women's Hockey teams during the Winter Olympics. /photos submitted by Lindsey Snelgrove

"The energy was really good, but the air was also a bit tense."

That's how one attendee of the women's Olympic gold medal hockey game described the atmosphere at the historical event, where the Canadian team earned silver after an overtime goal.

Lindsey Snelgrove grew up in Haliburton, but now lives and works in Toronto. And for the past year, her life was working towards one significant event: attending the Winter Olympics in Italy.

After nearly three weeks, the Olympic train has now slowed down, and with it, the buzz and energy around celebrating winter sport. But in its place, a newfound sense of patriotism and national pride has floated to the surface once again.

That's one thing that was felt amongst fans at the women's hockey game that Snelgrove described in detail, when she took some time to share her story with this newspaper. "There were a few injuries on the Canadian team, so people were preparing for either outcome, while at the same time hoping for gold," she shared. "We were sitting in a row with both Canadian and U.S.A. fans, and people were all friendly, chatting and excited. While there was light teasing about who would win, generally the atmosphere was that people were just excited for the game."

Snelgrove said that she had purchased the tickets to the Feb. 19 game nearly one full year ago. "It's been a long time coming," she said. "We spent nearly a week in Milan, experiencing different Olympic events and pop-ups, and generally touring the city. There were a lot of people there for one sport or another, and it was really fun to see people from every country supporting their teams in full gear and coordinating colours."

While the environment was largely touristy at the time of the visit, Snelgrove noted that the overall energy was positive and supportive of all athletes and visitors. "It felt generally friendly," she said, "walking through the streets and saying 'hi' to anyone in a Canada hat or jersey. We had other Canadians offer to take pictures for us, some stopped to ask where we were from and what sport we were there to watch, or just wave in passing, smile and continue on their way."

And when it came to the big game? According to Snelgrove, it was a sea of red and white. "It seemed like most of the fans that we saw were Canadian," she said. "The stands were full of red, many flags, and lots of jerseys. We were told that on the stream you could hear the chanting of 'U-S-A' louder than the Canadians, but it didn't feel that way when we were there."

In what was identified as the most watched Women's Olympic event in history, the close-game was a nail-biter, with a score of 1-1 heading into overtime, as the country held its breath.

"Overtime was tense," said Snelgrove, noting that the Olympic protocol for overtime play is instant three-on-three, as opposed to a shootout.

Four minutes into the extended play, American Megan Keller sniped a backhand goal. "The rink felt silent after the final goal," said Snelgrove. "American fans cheered, but because it seemed most people were Canadian, it was like someone pushed the mute button and everyone was quieter … just sad or disappointed. A few people left, but generally everyone stayed to support the silver medal for the achievement that it was."

Snelgrove noted that all teams were honoured shortly after the game, with Switzerland's team being called out to receive their bronze medal, and Canada donning silver. "When the teams lined up to shake hands, there were a lot of hugs and tears between the teams, not just amongst teammates," she said. "It wasn't just a casual handshake like I've seen at other games."

Over the 2026 Olympic season, Canada racked up 21 medals in total, with five gold, seven silver, and nine bronze.

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Control

WE SPEND a lot of our lives trying to be in control.

It's something that starts at a young age; toddlers adding the phrase 'mine mine mine' into their early repertoire, their little minds whirring with the glossy promise of autonomy.

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

It flows through peaks and valleys as we age. Our desire for control often peaks in teenage-hood, when the list of who can tell us what to do is whittled down to our own reflection, looking back at a face who believes they know the ropes better than anyone, but will inevitably be tangled more than once.

As adults, we enter the worlds of parenting, of partnering, of professionalism. Again, we carry that semblance of control into our decision making. And we're lucky, for the most part, that we have that option.

We control our decisions around our jobs, what we eat, where we live. And for the items that live beyond the realms of control; schedules, health, universal timings, we do whatever we can to add control to the chaos. We buy agendas and take vitamins and organize the day that lies ahead like clockwork.

But there is one item that lies beyond any opportunity for control. And it's not some small item that impacts few, or some optional incorporation that airs on the side of flighty.

It's a major thing. Something that everyone experiences, every single day.

The weather. It's probably the most utilized topic of conversation of all time. A shoe-in for any opening around small talk, a common denominator for two forces with no overlapping interests.

It can move mountains, it can burn cities. It can change the mood of an entire day, it can be the soundtrack to sorrow.

And we have absolutely no control over it.

Sure, there are small things we can do to mitigate our footprint on the planet. We can be mindful of our shopping habits and cognizant of our priorities when it comes to supporting elected officials. But much of the power around the future of the planet lies in the hands of billionaires; their span of reach stretching much further than our realm of control.

Yet the weather so actively controls us.

I watch it happen every year around this time. After months of dormancy, the world slowly starts to wake up; rustled from their winter slumber and eagerly embracing the first few rays of sunshine carrying a sprinkle of spring.

People are not just physically waking up, but emotionally as well. It's been noted that this is a season where many leave their jobs for a fresh start, relationships are either fizzled out or fired up, and the incessant need to purge and tidy comes to the surface.

The weather controls us.

And we can't control it.

That's a good reminder as we enter the season of false springs. Some days will feel promising, and then it will snow again. Other days will look glorious, but feel frigid.

That's the reality of it. We can't control it, and the sooner we come to terms with that, the smoother the season will seem.

And maybe there's a lesson in all this. That while there is comfort in the control, there is beauty in the unknown; the mystery of tomorrow forever crouched on the horizon.

Because life is what happens between the cracks of control.

Top 10 things maples say during syrup season

MAPLE SYRUP season is just around the corner. And while this is a pleasant time of year for all of us, I have to believe that the maples involved view it differently. With that in mind, here are the top 10 things maples might say during syrup season.

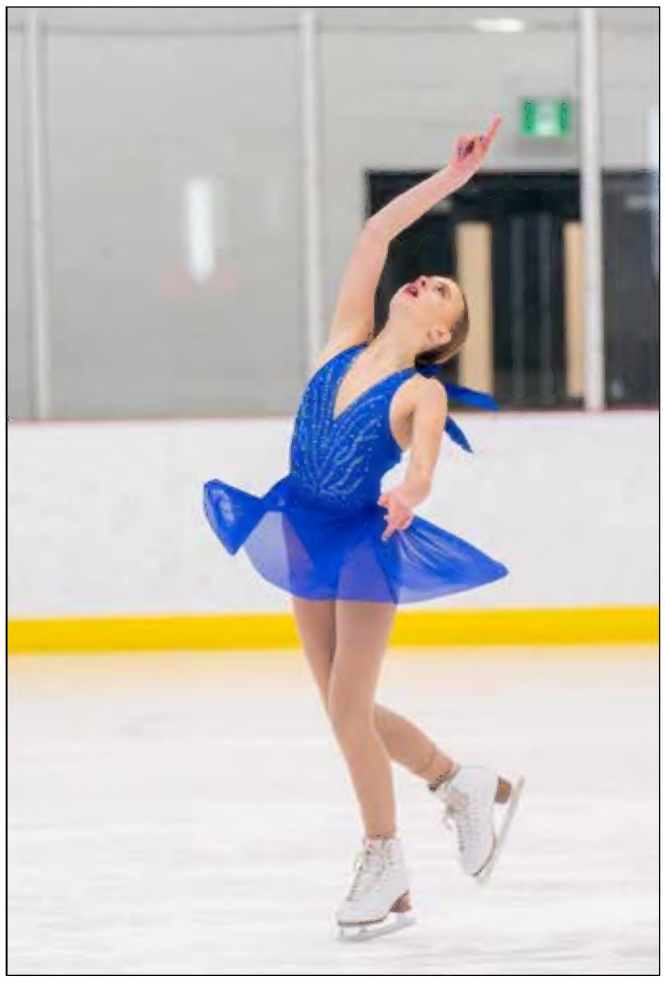
STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

1. "They visit once a year, and this is what they do?"
2. "They could at least wait till we're dressed."
3. "Do I look pail?"
4. This is the sappiest relationship I've ever been in."
5. "Why do they take such a large blood sample?"
6. "It's never just a hug."
7. "Boring."
8. "What's wrong with pine sap?"
9. "Did he just say, "I'd tap that?""
10. "Try this with an Ent. I dare you.

Solitary

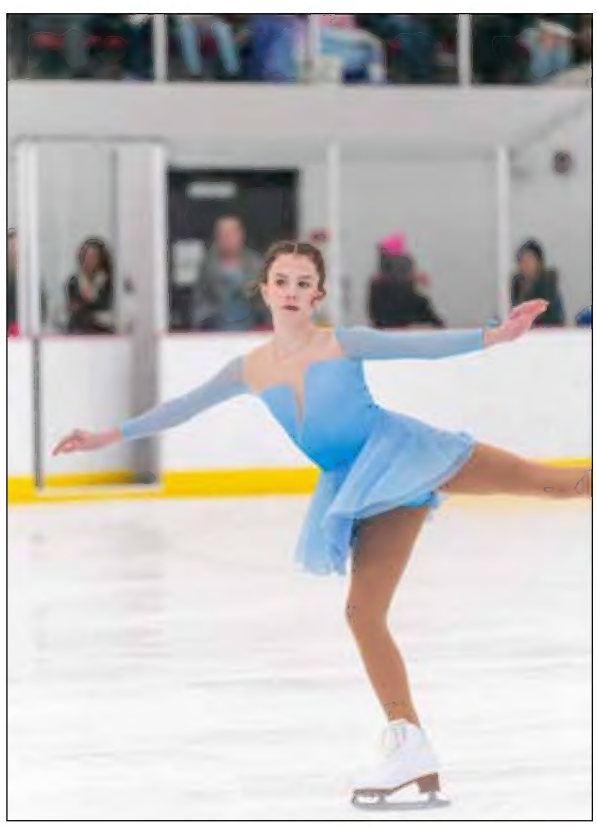
Fog blotting the hills, swallowing Sun in a Sky blank as Snow,
I stand on the tip of a finger of land, between a smear of trees, peering out at the black smudge
trudging across the frozen Lake, towards the opposite shore, towards the blurry border
where the white of Sky
bleeds into Snow, that blankets the ceiling of ice, my eyes squinting to see if they can distinguish
between Sky and Snow,
that fine line on the horizon, that invisible seam that the solitary stranger walks towards,
my eyes transfixed by the fleck of black, moving across the canvas of Snow and Sky, tiny as a fly,
wishing I had a camera or a paintbrush to capture the solitude of the lone figure, as they cross the frozen Lake
on this one winter day blotted by fog, before Air freezes again, not a wisp of Wind sweeping across Snow,
Air, still as the naked trees that I stand between, their branches reaching towards the blankness of Sky,
and the light of an invisible Sun on this blur of a day, when the stranger decided to walk through the Snow
across the frozen Lake, the smudge of black growing smaller and smaller'till it's swallowed by fog,
and all I see is the expanse of Sky and Snow, that empties and fills me at the same time,
the lone stranger's solitude seeping into me as I keep peering out at the whiteness of the horizon,
expecting the stranger to reappear, wondering if they turn to look over their shoulder, whether they will see
the same thing as me, a smudge of black standing between a smear of trees, on the tip of a finger of land,
cocooned in their solitude and the silence of trees, breathing in the wideness of the horizon
and that thin white line where Sky bleeds into Snow, the vastness of space that stretches out in front of me,
I want to reach out my hand and shake the stranger's, to thank them for sharing their solitude with me,
wondering whether they've reached the other side, and are now standing on land, between a smear of trees,
seeing the same blankness that I see, filling and emptying them at the same time,
like Sky drained of colour on this one winter day, the Sun still up there, waiting for the veil of fog to lift,
waiting to shine its light onto Snow, and stroke the bare branches of trees,
stoic and silent in their solitude, alone, together, sharing their space with me, as I linger on the tip
of the finger of land,
standing quiet and still, peering out at the hills on the other side, blotted by fog,
taking comfort in knowing that they are there, as I inhale swigs of Air, slow and deep,
feeling the dampness seep into my bones, as I turn to leave, glancing over my shoulder at the frozen Lake
one last time,
my eyes stroking that blurry white line where Sky meets Snow,
knowing that I am never Alone.

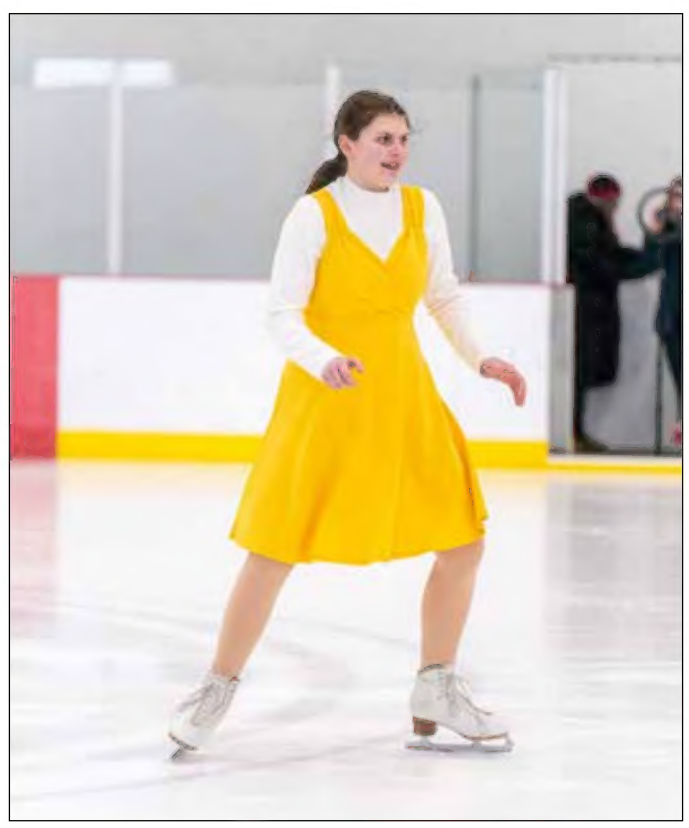
Sylvie Kalenda



A little spring in their step

The Minden Skating Club presented their annual Spring Gala on Sunday, March 1 at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena in Minden. Skaters of all ages took to the ice to showcase their season of growth, while a very full crowd cheered them on from the stands. /TIM YANO staff photographer





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LOCATION LOCATION LOCATION

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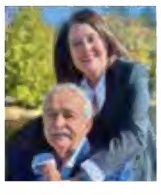

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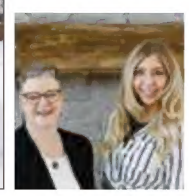
1044 SHANAHAN TRAIL $515,000

Step inside this adorable fully updated 2 bedroom cottage, just a stones throw from the public beach on Horseshoe Lake. This 1 acre property is made for entertaining, featuring three bunkies, a sauna, hot tub, and a fire pit, plus a large deck perfect for summertime barbecues. Check it out!



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RE/MAX Professionals North, Brokerage will be at the Spring Cottage Life Show.
March 26 - 29

SPRING Cottage Life SHOW

If you are thinking of selling your property this is a great opportunity to promote it. Contact a local RE/MAX agent for more details.

SPRING HOP

JOIN US SATURDAY, MARCH 28TH

WHAT FREE Easter fun for all ages!
WHEN 12-3PM Mar 28
WHERE Head Lake Park, Haliburton

- Easter Egg Hunt
- Face Painting
- Colouring Station
- Pics with the Easter Bunny
- Easter Crafts
- and much, much more!

THIS IS A RAIN, SNOW, OR SHINE EVENT!

A fuzzy friend of ours has also promised a visit...

Hop on over and **Meet the Easter Bunny!**

We'll also be collecting monetary and non-perishable donations for the **Haliburton 4 C's Food Bank** to support local families in need.

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Senior Boys Nordic Team: from left, Brady Hamilton, Owen Megrah-Poppe, Winston Ramsdale, Carter Sisco, Evan and Graham Backus gather at Hardwood Hills during the OFSAA Nordic Skiing Championships.

The HHSS Junior Girls Nordic team of Kailey Hoare, Anika Suke, Annika Gervais and Quinn Hamilton captured 8th in the team Interval races and flew to 4th in the 4x1km Sprint Relay. /submitted

Success for local teams at OFSAA

KAREN GERVAIS
County Life Contributor

The Haliburton Highlands Nordic Ski team travelled to the Ontario Federation of Secondary Athletic Associations (OFSAA) Championships held at Hardwood Hills Ski and Bike in Orillia on February 24 and 25. The rapidly plunging then rising temperatures had skiers wiping frost from their chins, masking their faces with KT tape and coaches scratching their heads about how to wax skis. The temperature dipped low enough Tuesday morning to cause race convenors to shuffle the start order the day before, putting seniors out on the course first instead of junior and para skiers during the coldest part of the day.

That meant Red Hawk skier Violet Humphries, one of the first skiers to travel the 7.6 km Senior course at 10:06 a.m. for the Interval races, faced frigid temperatures hovering around -20°C with a wind chill near -30°C. Despite the cold, Humphries managed to put down a fast time of 27:20.5 to earn a tenth-place finish in the Senior Girls High School Division. OFSAA Nordic Skiing classifies their skiers into two divisions for individual finishes: High School racers that train exclusively with their school team and Open skiers that train and compete with a club.

Ella Gervais was the next finisher for the Hawks in 40th, Olivia Gruppe 53rd, Grace Allder 58th and Ruby Morrison 86th in a field of 117 skiers. This was Morrison's first year learning to cross country ski. As a Senior Girls team, the Hawks finished in 9th place, just one spot out of ribbon position. The team finish is determined by the lowest sum of the top four skiers on a team, but includes both Open and High School skiers from one school.

The sun kept shining with a gradual warming throughout the morning. Senior Boy Evan Backus was the top HHSS finisher, gliding over in the line in 26:52.7 to place 36th. Winston Ramsdale placed 46th, Graham Backus 55th, Carter Sisco 62nd, Brady Hamilton 71st and Owen Megrah-Poppe 79th. The Senior Boys team finished 13th overall in the Interval races.

On the Junior 5.5 km course, which like the Senior course featured lots of challenging climbs and fast corners, Annika Gervais skied to a determined fifth-place finish in High School Girls, fuelled by her success at OFSAA Nordic last year. Her time was 20:40.0. Grade 9 skier Anika Suke crossed the line in 12th and Kailey Hoare was 48th, followed closely by Quinn Hamilton in 51st. Hamilton also donned skis of the cross country kind for the first time this winter. Alternate Leah Allder finished 72nd out of 106 High School skiers. The Junior Girls' performances earned them an eighth-place team finish and a burgundy ribbon.

Junior Boy Red Hawks also proved they were a force on snow. Alex Lee was the top finisher in a time of 19:36.5 placing 15th. Through his steady commitment, Lee has shown tremendous improvement throughout the season. Tristan Humphries followed closely in 18th, Duncan Evans-Fockler 31st and Kip Kelly 33rd. Team alternate and first-year Nordic skier Aren Addison placed 89th out of 120. The Boys' performances earned them a fifth-place finish as a team.

OFSAA Nordic Day Two saw the temperatures swing upwards towards zero creating very soft and slow conditions on the hills in the 4x1km Sprint Relay. Due to the Ontario Winter Games moving in that night, the Junior Girls heats started at 8 a.m.

The Junior skiers once again brought some fire and both skied into the finals in their respective races. Junior Girls Annika Gervais, Kailey Hoare, Quinn Hamilton and Anika Suke brought their speed and grit to knock another seven seconds off their heat time and race into fourth place in the final after the starting skier from the number one ranked Nepean was late to the line.

Junior Boys Tristan Humphries, Alex Lee, Duncan Evans-Fockler and Kip Kelly also shaved 16 seconds from their heat time to secure a fifth-place final finish. Three of these skiers are in Grade 9.

The Senior Girls team battled hard and hung on to their ninth-place position out of 16 teams, disappointingly missing the final by one spot. Senior Boys moved up from 13th to place 10th in the relay out of 21 teams.

HHSS Coaches Karen Gervais and Mike Rieger want the thank community coaches Joleen Thomas, Judy Suke and Kevin Hoare for their support of the team; community members for volunteering at our races this year and contributing to our fundraising efforts; as well as the hard-working groomers at Glebe Park for the many hours spent maintaining the trails and preparing them for races.

The coaches would also like to acknowledge the commitment of the Grade 12 skiers who were instrumental in reviving the Nordic program at Hal High and growing it into a highly successful team that saw 21 skiers compete at OFSAA this year.

Full results can be found on zone4.ca under 2026 OFSAA.

Legion Events

Branch 441 Kinmount

Monday: Bid Euchre 1 p.m., Card night 7 p.m.
Wednesday: Mixed Darts, 7:30 p.m.
Friday: Bingo- Doors open at 5 p.m., play at 6:45 p.m.
Saturday: Clubroom opens at 3 p.m. Meat draw 5 p.m.
Special events:
2nd Sunday of the month Ladies Auxiliary - 11 a.m.
3rd Thursday of the month 7 p.m. executive meeting and 7:30 p.m. general meeting (members only)
Last Sunday of the month - All you can eat breakfast
Hall rentals available at reasonable prices.
Email: 441RCL@gmail.com Call 705-488-3462 or 705-928-7105. We welcome everyone to our events and we look forward to seeing you!

Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Bridge 1 p.m. Schofield Rm. Youth darts 6:30 to 8 p.m. Clubroom 10 to 18 years of age. All are welcome, no experience necessary
Tuesdays: League darts 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start – Main Hall. Bingo doors open at 6 p.m. Bingo 7 p.m. FirstWed of each month with jackpot. Follow Facebook.com/Branch129 Bingo for the most up-to-date information
Thursdays: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m. All members urged to attend.
Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
Fridays: Five meat draw, five prizes each draw, first draw 4:30 p.m., last draw 6:30 p.m. Tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts from 4:30 p.m. and onwards. 50/50 Draw 5:40 p.m.
Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, call Cheryl Waller at 905-447-7741, email haliburtonlegionrentals@gmail.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com. Everyone is welcome! Club room hours: Mon. 3 to 6 p.m., Tues. 3 to 9 p.m., Wed/Thurs. 3 to 6 p.m. Fri. 3 to 7 p.m.

Branch 636 Minden

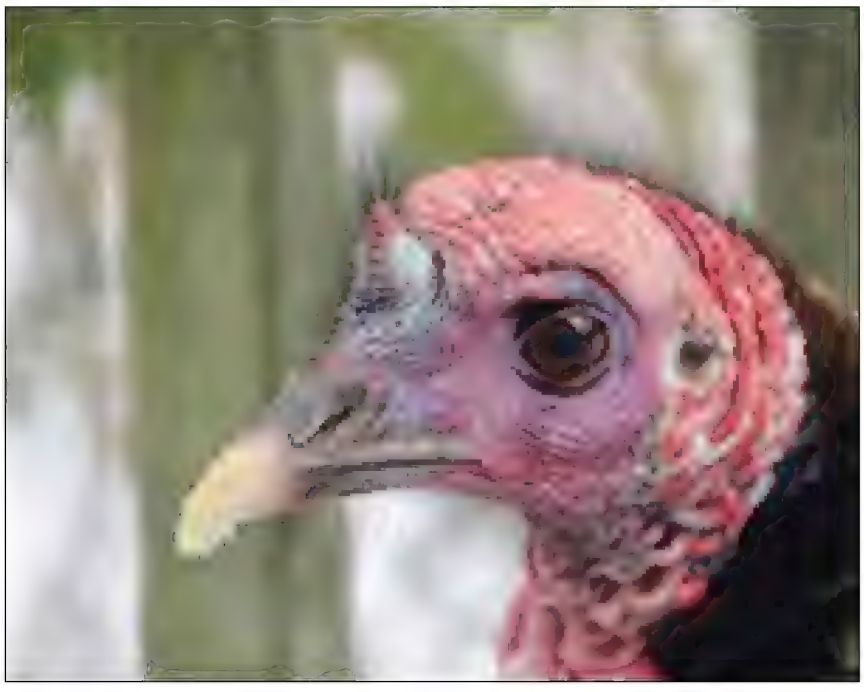
Lunch - Monday to Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week. Bid Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Tuesday: Food 5 p.m. Canoe FM Bingo 6 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m., Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
Every other Friday: Karaoke 8 to 11 p.m.
Friday Fish & Chips, Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
Saturday All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with three Meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541.
Schedules are subject to change without notice.
Check our Facebook page Minden Legion Branch 636 for more info.

Branch 624 Wilberforce

Hours - Sunday: Special Events Only, Monday: 7 to 10 p.m., Tuesday: Special Events Only, Wednesday: 2 to 10 p.m., Thursday: 2 to 6 p.m., Friday: 2 to 11 p.m., Saturday: 2 to 7 p.m.
Sundays: March 29 Cribbage Tournament. Registration is at 10 a.m.
Mondays: March 16, 23, 30 Darts $5/player 7 p.m.
Tuesdays: March 17, 2, 31 Veteran's and Seniors Exercise Club 1:30 p.m.
Wednesdays: March 18, 25 - Darts $5/player 2 p.m.
Quick Supper Menu changes weekly $10. 5 to 6:30 p.m.
Open Cribbage 6:30 p.m. – No need to pre-register
Thursdays: March 12, 26 HHHS Social Rec 10 a.m.
Friday: March 20 Fish and Chips 1pc/$15, 2pc/$20. 5 to 8 p.m. Karaoke 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
March 13, 27 Wings and Jam Session $15/lb. 5 to 8 p.m.
Community Care 55+ Lunch $20. 12 p.m.
Saturdays: March 14, 21, 28 Meat Draw 3 p.m.
March 14 St. Paddy's at The Beach Dance 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.
March 28 Nacho Average Trivia Registration is at 6:30 p.m. Game Begins at 7 p.m. Sharp. $5/Player
Call the Legion for more info 705-448-222

Nature in your backyard

County Life welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email emily@ haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.



Turkey by Maggie Lawrence

Chickadee by Jill Moulton

Grey Jay by Tammy Nash

Pine Marten with his tongue out by Tammy Nash

Peekaboo Deer by Debi Ireland

Eagles on Cranberry Lake by Karen Armstrong

Cheeky Squirrel by Tammy Nash

classifieds@haliburtonpress.com
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Wanted: scrap cars and trucks. Cash paid. Please call **705-286-3758** or **cell 249-332-1212**

After School Helper/Nanny needed for busy Haliburton family! Flexible, organized, child-focused multitasker required. Monday to Friday, Approx. 2:30-7:30 pm. Join our family team. Email alicia@mindenah.com

COMING EVENTS

Stained Glass Workshops. From beginner up. Registration open now. Learn the art of stained glass. Call Tom for details. 705-286-3628

FOR RENT

Newly renovated 2-unit house on 9.5 scenic acres near Haliburton. LOWER: 1-bed, 1-bath. Features open-concept living, new appliances, in-unit laundry and outdoor living spaces. 10 minutes from Haliburton & perfect for peaceful living. Contact: info@aboveboardcarpentry.com **705-455-2196**

Spacious one bedroom, one bath lower apartment located in the heart of Minden. The apartment provides a perfect blend of town and country living. Features include front door access, open concept living, in-unit laundry and outdoor living spaces, internet and preferential parking spots. $1,875 All inclusive plus shared hydro. Please Contact: **647-394-4899.** Photos available upon request.

GET IT **online**
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www.mindentimes.ca

SERVICES

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COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR RENT

Fitness Room for rent: Blue Sky Yoga Studio at Haliburton Chiropractic. Bright & Open in Downtown Haliburton with Private entrance and washroom. **Health Professional/Therapist treatment room for rent** at Haliburton Chiropractic. Furnished with massage table, desk & chair. Available by the hour, half or full day. Contact: 705-457-3500. info@haliburtonchiropractic.com

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Community Events

Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

Seedy Saturday
When: March 28, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Where: Minden Community Centre Upper Level, 55 Markside St.
Minden & District Horticultural Society will be hosting their first ever "Seedy Saturday" with a seed exchange, demonstrations, vendor booths, advice clinic and kid's activities. See our website for updated information.

Recurring events

TOPS: Take Off Pounds Sensibly
When: Monday mornings 9:30 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion Branch 129, upper level
Admission: Yearly membership of $59
A non-profit/commercial network of weight-loss support groups, offers programs for healthy living and weight management.

Bridge for Seniors
When: Mondays at 1 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Schofield Room
All welcome

Haliburton Legion Walking Group
When: Mondays at 9 to 10 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
A safe walking environment. Lead by an Occupational therapist.

Free Balanced Fitness and Active Social Senior Classes
When: Every second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 10 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
All seniors are welcome. Group led by Registered Recreation Therapist

Bid Euchre
When: Wednesdays at 1 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
All welcome!

Duplicate Bridge - Please arrange for a partner.
When: Wednesdays at 12:45 at Park Lane Apartments. Fridays at 12:45 at Haliburton Legion, Schofield Room.

Cards/Euchre/Cribbage
When: Thursdays at 2:30 p.m.
Where: St. George's Church
617 Mountain Street

Monthly Community Breakfast
When: Fourth Saturday of Every Month from 9-11am
Where: Fellowship Room, Haliburton United Church, 10 George St. Haliburton
Hosted by North Entrance Masonic Lodge and Haliburton United Church. This welcoming event is intended to bring together members of the community for good food and fellowship. There is no fixed cost for attending the breakfast. Donations are warmly welcomed and will be put to meaningful use supporting local initiatives. A portion of the proceeds collected from the breakfast will be donated to the Public School Breakfast Program in Haliburton County, helping to ensure that local students start their day with a nutritious meal.

Lakeside Church Service
When: Sunday at 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
Where: 9 Park Street, Haliburton.
Whoever you are, wherever you've been, you are welcome here.

Weekly Meat Rolls
When: Every Saturday, 3 p.m.
Where: Coboconk Legion, Hwy 48 and 35
Join us for our weekly meat draw at the Coboconk Legion. Five spins for $10. The first four rounds are for highest and lowest score with two winners per round. The last round is for a prepare-it-yourself dinner for two. Additional spins for this round are available for $2 each. Call 705-454-8127 or email info@coboconklegion.ca for more information.

Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library New Book Nook Hours
When: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Where: Minden Hills Branch, 176 Bobcaygeon Rd. Minden
Choose from a variety of gently read books: thrillers, mysteries, romance, biographies, children and youth selections, Canadian authors, fiction, science fiction/fantasy, sports, spiritual and other non-fiction books. Bring a reusable bag. Payment is by cash donation. All money raised supports library enhancements and programmes for all libraries in the county.

Wilberforce Visitor Information Centre
When: Thursday to Monday 10 a.m. 4 p.m. (Closed Tuesday and Wednesday)
Where: 2786 Essonville Line in Wilberforce, at the Curling Club
We offer mineral permission to collect forms, directions, geocaching information and GPS rentals, trails, events, and other general area information. Free Wi-Fi is also available.

Mineral Collecting
Mineral collecting is a fun outdoor activity. Adults and kids alike will delight in the chance to dig for buried treasure and bring home some colourful gems of your very own! Get a Permission to Collect form (free) from our website highlandseast.ca.

Geocaching
Geocaching is a family friendly outdoor game. It's often referred to as "treasure hunting with a high tech twist" because you use the geocaching.com website and either a GPS device or a smartphone. GPS Rentals are available from the Visitor Information Centre and come preloaded so you can start playing right away.

Trails
Whether you like to walk or run, ride a bike, horse or an ATV, one of Highlands East's trails is sure to please. Come enjoy the fall colours. Maps and descriptions can be found on our website highlandseast.ca.

Local Service Directory

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County holds the line on spending in '97

■ *But don't expect major road projects*

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

Despite cuts in provincial funding and being responsible for an extra 100 km of highways, local taxpayers won't have to pay any more money to run the county government.

The only drawback is they can't expect any major construction projects to fix problems on the county's roads.

At a special meeting Tuesday night, county council adopted its 1997 budget, with a zero percent increase in bottom line.

"Three years ago we said we couldn't cut more and that was $2-million ago," commented Warden Murray Fearrey. "Now we're pretty lean everywhere and I don't know where money will come from (to cope with future cuts.)"

"It will be a difficult year but it's our belief these numbers are obtainable," said Cardiff deputy-reeve Doug Holman, who's the chairman of the county's finance committee. He credits the hard work of the department heads for holding the line on spending at a time when provincial grants are drying up.

The departments were able to balance an overall drop in revenues of 3.5% with an equal spending drop.

Compared to other years, the biggest casualty was the roads department because it will take on no major construction projects. It will spend 15% less on construction than it did last year. Last year's projects will be completed, and a few roads will get resurfaced, but most of the department's $2.97-million budget will be spent on maintenance.

"Last year we had an ambitious construction and resurfacing program," says county engineer Les Shepherd. "Some roads (maintenance) work was postponed last year and we probably can't get away with not doing it this year."

The county roads department will also be responsible for 100 km of roadway which previous-

See BUDGET page 8

Victorious Victoria!

When this young lamb was born a few weeks ago at Southpaw Farm, her legs were splayed so badly that she was unable to walk. When Anthony Micalles volunteered to nurse her back to health, he named her Victoria because he knew she'd be victorious and learn to walk. Anthony, who himself is unable to walk, was right. Victoria will soon not have to wear this brace fashioned from an old wool sweater. For more details, please see page 3

SSFC backs future growth of its Haliburton campus

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

Sir Sandford Fleming College's board of governors has endorsed further development of the college's Haliburton campus over the next three to five years.

The board approved a report put together by the Haliburton Restructuring Advisory committee, recommending a strategy for the campus to grow.

In part, the committee recommends that the campus focus on expanding three main program areas — the School of Fine Arts, Ecotourism and Employability Skills and Contract Training.

"The board has reaffirmed the college's commitment to meeting local and provincial needs in Haliburton," SSFC president Brian Desbiens says in a news release. "The decision for incremental growth is good news for both the community and the college. And this is a significant commitment, given the province's substantial cutbacks in education funding."

See SCHOOL page 6

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Forensic testing reveals marijuana which caused teen's heart attack wasn't 'spiked'

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

Forensic testing has shown that the marijuana which caused a 15-year-old high school student to have a heart attack was simply that – marijuana, the Minden OPP says.

"Because of hydroponic growing systems, marijuana is really potent now," says the investigating officer, Const. Mike Landry. "It's getting to the point where the content of THC is getting higher and higher."

THC is the drug in the marijuana leaves.

Another contributing factor was the method the teenager and his friend used to smoke the marijuana. Essentially, a plastic bottle was filled with the smoke, which was then inhaled so that none of the smoke dissipated into the air.

The bottle used by the boys, who are both students at Haliburton Highlands Secondary

See MARIJUANA page 2

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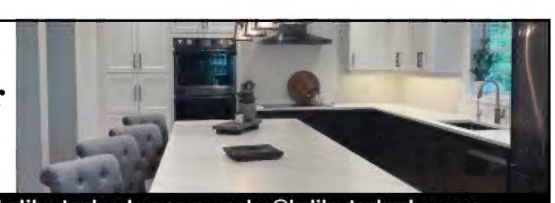
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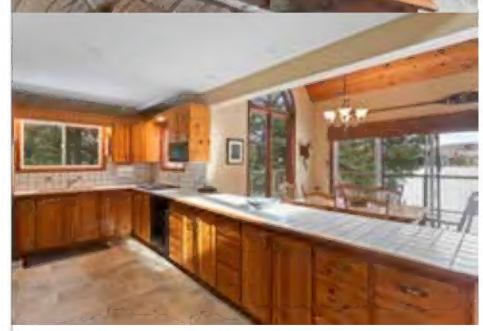

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